JEPH LOEB

TIM SALE

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DAREDEVIL®: YELLOW

MARVEL MAX

MARVEL PG

Book Four: NEVER LEAD WITH YOUR LEFT

TS 2K

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Dear Karen,
There is so much I wanted to tell you. So many adventures I thought we would share.

When you're young, you think you're going to live forever.

IS *THAT* THE BEST YOU'VE GOT?

Book Four: NEVER LEAD WITH YOUR LEFT

I had gone over to The Baxter Building because our client, Reed Richards, had wanted me to look into the lease.

I remember you once asking me how these things start and my joking about how someone has to throw the first punch.

Electro -- a man who could absorb and discharge electricity -- was there and he shouldn't have been.

I had brought my costume along in my briefcase. In my briefcase, Karen, what was I thinking about?

And. He threw the first punch.

DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU COULD STOP ME?

I'VE FOUGHT *SPIDER-MAN* TO A STANDSTILL!

YOU'RE HARDLY WORTH MY TIME!

Villains would talk a lot back then.

They didn't leave innocent women in a pool of blood...

...I guess...I haven't really thought about it...but the ones in costume never used to kill anybody...

ZZZRAK!

NNNGGNN!

Deep down, I knew this wasn't my fight. The Fantastic Four probably had a hundred ways of dealing with someone like Electro.

I'M GOING TO LET YOU LIVE *THIS* TIME. I WANT YOU TO *ALWAYS* REMEMBER THAT IF YOU GO UP AGAINST *ELECTRO* --

-- YOU'RE GOING TO *LOSE.*

My teeth fillings were still rattling from the electric jolts in his punches.

If the soles of my shoes hadn't been rubber, I'm sure I would've been hurt a lot worse.

So, I did what any blind lawyer with two degrees from Columbia University would have done in this situation.

I followed him.

The "how" was the easy part. His electron-charged particles shimmered in my head like a neon trail.

MUSIC HALL

RADIO CITY Music Hall

FABULOUS ROCKETTES

The "why" of "Why did I follow him?"... That's not so easy.

HE WENT UP THERE!

SOMEBODY CALL THE POLICE!

Looking back on it, it was all so "There's no need to fear, Underdog is here...!"

LADIES...

But, this wasn't a cartoon. There was no Sweet Polly who was in danger.

SHOOM

In fact, all Electro had done was stolen some of Reed Richards' papers in the hopes of selling top secrets.

IT'S ONE OF THOSE *"SUPER HEROES"!*

YOU MEAN, LIKE *"SPIDER-MAN"?!*

NO! I'VE GOT A COUSIN WHO'S A COP. HE SAYS HE'S CALLED *"DAREDEVIL"!*

OUT TO MAKE A NAME FOR YOURSELF? IS *THAT* IT, DAREDEVIL?

YOU FIGURE BRINGING IN A "SUPER-VILLAIN" IS GOING TO GET YOU INTO THE *AVENGERS* OR SOMETHING?

I had put on the costume to find justice for my Dad's murder. What did this have to do with that?

WELL, *NOT* ON *MY* DIME, PAL.

YOU STICK WITH SMALL TIME WISEGUYS WITH THEIR POP GUNS.

TOK

POP!

YEAH, I HEARD ALL ABOUT HOW YOU SHUT DOWN *"THE FIXER"* AND HIS BOYS.

IF YOU WANT TO PLAY IN THE *BIG* LEAGUES, YOU'D BETTER LEARN TO CARRY A BIGGER --

VZZZT!

--STICKKKK!

Super heroes. Super-villains. Avengers. Fantastic Four. Making a name for myself.

This was new.

BAM!

NOW, I THINK SOMEONE SHOULD CALL THE POLICE.

Maybe, this wasn't why I was struck by a radioactive isotope that took away my vision and heightened my other senses.

Maybe, I was somehow wasting all the time I put in practicing -- honing my skills -- training without my Dad knowing.

HE'S SO HANDSOME UP CLOSE.

WISH MY BOYFRIEND HAD *THOSE* MUSCLES.

ARE YOU MARRIED, MISTER DAREDEVIL?

DO YOU HAVE A *GIRLFRIEND,* MISTER DAREDEVIL?

But...I liked it.

Did I have a girlfriend, Karen?

-- FURTHER, MISTER *"OWL,"* WHILE WE MAY REPRESENT YOU, NOT HAVING YOUR FULL LEGAL NAME IS PROBLEMATIC --

DIPLOMA

NELSON AND MURDOCK

OMIGOSH! MISTER NELSON, *LOOK!*

KAREN, WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S WRONG?

I SAW HIM. THE NEW ONE.

THAT *DAREDEVIL* PERSON.

I'M SURE YOU DID, KAREN. WE LIVE IN NEW YORK CITY.

WE HAVE THE *FANTASTIC FOUR* FOR OUR CLIENTS. *THE THING* STUCK HIS BIG, FAT HEAD THROUGH THAT WALL.

AND RIGHT NOW, WE'RE REPRESENTING SOMEONE WHO COULD BE THE *BIRDMAN OF ALCATRAZ* FOR ALL WE KNOW --

-- AND I'D *LIKE* TO THINK YOU WERE TAKING DICTATION AND *NOT* LOOKING OUT THE WINDOW FOR MEN IN THEIR PAJAMAS.

ANY IDEA WHERE I WAS?

"-- FURTHER, MISTER 'OWL,' WHILE WE MAY REPRESENT YOU, NOT HAVING YOUR FULL LEGAL NAME IS PROBLEMATIC --"

AND I THINK, MISTER NELSON, YOU WERE GOING TO FINISH THE SENTENCE *"-- WITH REGARD TO OUR BILLING YOU."*

OH.

GOOD.

AND, IT'S *"FOGGY,"* KAREN, OKAY?

AREN'T YOU JUST THE LEAST BIT CURIOUS WHAT A *SUPER HERO* IS DOING IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD?

WHAT IF HE LIVES AROUND HERE?

WHAT IF HE *SUDDENLY* CAME WALKING THROUGH *THAT* --

-- DOOR -- HELLO, MISTER MURDOCK.

HELLO, KAREN. FOGGY. WHAT'S ALL THE EXCITEMENT?

KAREN THINKS SHE SAW A *SUPER HERO* FLY BY.

REALLY? WHICH ONE? I LIKE THAT *SPIDER-MAN* MYSELF.

IT WAS *DAREDEVIL.*

WHO?

AND HE DID NOT *FLY* BY, MISTER NELSON. HE *SWINGS.* WITH A BILLY CLUB.

BILLY CLUB, KAREN? YOU SEEM TO KNOW A LOT ABOUT THIS *"DAREDEVIL"* FELLOW.

I READ THE *DAILY BUGLE.*

OH, THE DAILY BUGLE. THEY DON'T LIKE *SPIDER-MAN* AT ALL.

HEY, MATT, HOW'D YOU KNOW I WAS HERE WHEN YOU FIRST WALKED IN?

AFTERSHAVE.

TOO MUCH, Y'THINK?

I DON'T THINK YOU WEAR IT FOR *ME,* FOGGY.

SO, KAREN, THIS DAREDEVIL, HE'S NOT YOUR *BOYFRIEND* OR ANYTHING?

SNIF

WHAT? OF COURSE NOT, MISTER MURDOCK.

I DON'T *HAVE* A BOYFRIEND.

YOU *DON'T?!*

NO.

I DON'T.

SO... I WAS, UH, THINKING ABOUT GOING *BOWLING* TONIGHT AND --

I LIKE BOWLING.

I'M IN.

YOU? YOU'RE THE ORIGINAL *"I CAN'T TELL A STRIKE FROM A GUTTER BALL"* GUY.

FIRST TIME FOR EVERYTHING, FOGGY.

AND I'LL BE GLAD TO HELP YOU, MISTER MURDOCK.

PLANA

MURDOCK AND

Amazing what an afternoon with The Rockettes will do for your self-confidence.

Empire Lanes

BULLET

COCKTAIL LOUNGE

YES! STRIKEREENO!

My Dad would talk about when the other Fighter would have him against the ropes.

DID YOU SEE THAT, *"MISS PAGE"!* RIGHT DOWN THE MIDDLE. DID YOU SEE?

YES, I DID, MISTER NELSON.

AND WITH THE WAY YOU'RE SHOUTING, I'M SURE EVEN MISTER MURDOCK *SAW* IT.

OH. I. UM, NO OFFENSE, MISTER MURDOCK.

NONE TAKEN, KAREN. IN A WAY, I *DID* SEE IT. FROM THE WAY FOGGY DESCRIBED IT.

THEN, *WRITE IT DOWN,* KAREN. WRITE. IT. DOWN.

AND, UH, YOU'RE UP, MATT.

ARE YOU SURE YOU WOULDN'T LIKE A LITTLE HELP?

I COULD BREAK ONE EIGHTY TONIGHT. I COULD...

NO, THANKS, I THINK I GOT IT.

YOU *WILL* TELL ME IF I'M AIMING AT THE SNACK BAR, WON'T YOU, KAREN?

The crowd always thought the fighter was in jeopardy. My Dad liked that. He was holding it all back, in reserve. Waiting for the other man to run out of gas.

THUNK

OH, MISTER MURDOCK...

NICE AND EASY. YOU JUST WANT TO PUT THE BALL DOWN ON THE FLOOR AND GIVE IT A PUSH.

KAREN, YOU REALLY DON'T HAVE TO --

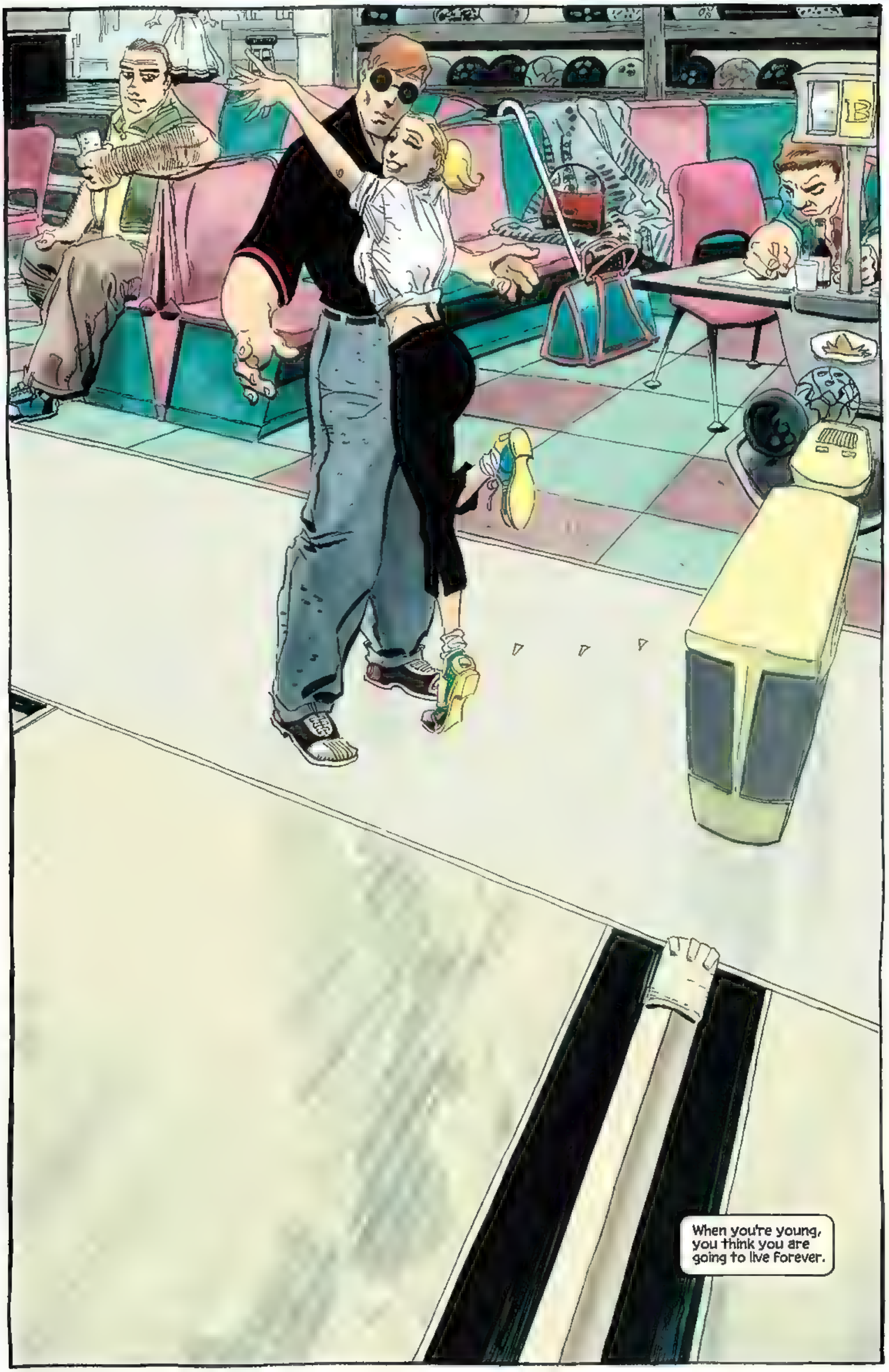
SHH. YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE CONCENTRATING.

DID WE HIT ANYTHING?

SHH!

PLOK

The problem, of course, was that there was always a chance you would wait too long and run out of gas yourself.


When you're young, you think you are going to live forever.

I'll never forget that night, Karen. It was the first time I felt your body pressed against me.

It was like...

It was like your heart was pounding right inside of mine.

NEW YORK STATE PENITENTIARY

It wasn't that long after that night, Slade, the man who had put a bullet in the back of my Dad's head, was put to death. I thought I'd be ironic and bring pistachio nuts and eat them in the gallery.

I didn't...couldn't take them out of my pocket.

Both you and Foggy urged me not to attend.

But, the lawyer part of me wanted to know what an execution was like.

The good son wanted to see it through to the end.

I think I thought it was going to be like Fighting Electro. Sparks and jolts and excitement and...

...it wasn't.

CHOOM

DANGER HIGH VOLTAGE

The smell, Karen. Even through the glass partition. Even if it had been three feet of poured concrete.

The smell...

I went back to the apartment. I don't know if you remember that I lived there after my Dad died.

I think I told you some excuse about not being able to find affordable housing, when all I really wanted to do was hold onto him for a little longer.

But, the firm was making money now, and I could change a few things. I bought a refrigerator that didn't leak. A new mattress for the bed.

I never got rid of his chair.

Every morning, I passed your desk and slipped my fingers across your handwriting. You always left out your steno notes from our meetings.

My words in your hand.

Maybe...that's why I agreed to write these letters to you now.

MATT? MATT, THAT YOU?!

I found Foggy that morning wearing a hole into the carpet.

OH, GOOD, IT *IS* YOU. I THOUGHT IT MIGHT'VE BEEN KAREN --

-- NO, NO, I *SENT* KAREN OVER TO *"THE OWL'S"* OFFICE WITH SOME PAPERWORK. THAT GUY'S A WEIRD OLD BIRD. HA/ I MADE A JOKE. OWL. BIRD. HEH.

SOMETHING ON YOUR MIND, FOGGY? YOU SOUND A LITTLE... *TENSE.*

HOW LONG HAVE WE KNOWN EACH OTHER, MATT? DON'T ANSWER THAT -- IT'S A RHETORICAL -- BUT THE POINT IS --

-- THE *POINT* IS YOU'VE KNOWN ME LONG ENOUGH TO KNOW WHEN I CAN TELL SOMETHING IS RIGHT, I *KNOW* IT.

I KNEW IT THE FIRST DAY I MET YOU. *"NELSON ≠ MURDOCK"* JUST FLASHED IN MY HEAD. AND HERE WE ARE.

AND HERE WE ARE...MATT, I'VE THOUGHT ABOUT IT LONG AND HARD AND I'VE MADE UP MY MIND.

I was so blind, Karen. I could sense things no other person could, but on this one subject, I was in the dark.

I'M GOING TO ASK KAREN TO *MARRY* ME.

LOEB SALE 2001